



Howard County

Internal Memorandum

Subject: Testimony – Community Legacy Grant Application Resolution

To: Lonnie R. Robbins, Chief Administrative Officer

From: Stacy L. Spann, Director
Housing and Community Development

Date: September 8, 2010

Resolution 118-2010 approves the application for Maryland Community Legacy Grant Program funds in the amount of \$200,000 to help pay for development and construction costs associated with the development of the 10-unit single-family subdivision to be known as the “Cottages at Greenwood” (formerly the “Glens at Guilford”) (the “Development”).

Background

The Howard County Housing Commission (the “Commission”) plans to build the “Cottages at Greenwood,” (formerly called the “Glens at Guilford”), a 10-unit single-family home development located on 3.43 acres on Mary Lane in Jessup. The Commission purchased the land for the project in 2002 using CDBG and Community Legacy funds. Following a highly competitive selection process, the Commission selected a development team consisting of Stavrou Development, Marks Thomas Architects, Baltimore Green Construction, and Vogel Engineering to design and build the community. The three-fold goal of the project is to provide a unique blend of sustainable green techniques, universal design, and affordability. The three-bedroom, two-bath homes will be sold to Howard County residents making 80% or less of the Baltimore Metropolitan Statistical area median income.

Some of the anticipated benefits of the project are:

A. Sustainable Green Techniques. The green design techniques include Craftsman-style cottages with a site design that is integrated with the topography, minimizing vegetative clearing, erosion, vista and grading impacts. Individual homes are oriented to maximize solar benefits and energy conservation. Canopy shade trees will be planted along west and south sides of the homes not shaded by street trees to reduce energy use and increase comfort. Canopy shade trees along the drive shading south-facing homes will reduce pavement reflection of heat to reduce energy use and increase energy conservation. The most progressive storm water best-management practices have been incorporated into the site plan to maximize ground infiltration, including complete on-site storm water capture. All streets, drives and patios – including a central community court – will utilize permeable paving.

The exterior of the homes incorporate the following green features:

- Innovative staggered stud wall construction with high R-value insulation in the walls and roof provide a tight thermal envelop.
- Deep overhangs and covered porch to block summer sun.
- High SRI roofing shingles to reduce the heat island effect and summer heat loading.
- Winter sun penetrates large low-e, double pane insulated Energy Star-rated windows.
- Insulated concrete slab on grade provides thermal mass for solar gain during winter months.

The interior will include the following features:

- Throughout: Low or no-VOC finished; stained, polished concrete flooring providing thermal mass, and green label certified carpet in the bedrooms.
- Bathroom: Low flow water fixtures (sink, toilet, and shower) and high efficiency ventilation.
- Mechanical: Small, high efficiency system with short duct runs to minimize energy loss.
- Tankless water heaters in all units.
- Laundry: High efficiency front-loading laundry equipment, including Energy Star-rated washer and gas powered dryer.
- Kitchen: Energy Star-rated appliances, including refrigerator and dishwasher; low flow sink fixture; and high efficiency ventilation hood. Counter top and backsplash are made out of recycled and fast growing materials (recycled glass backsplash, eco-top counters).

B. Energy Savings. According to our computer energy simulation, a typical ("base model") house of similar size would consume 49.5 MTBU of energy per year in both electricity and natural gas, and would cost the homeowner \$2,004.55 based upon modeling cost assumptions.

Our homes, as currently modeled, show an energy consumption of just 18.68 MTBU per year, which represents a reduction of 62.3% under the base model. The homeowner will have to pay just \$899.54 in utility bills (including a BGE Energy Savers rebate of no less than \$100 per year), for a total cost savings of 55.1% under the base model.

Another way of looking at this is to say that the homes would likely qualify for an Energy Star rating of approximately 38, an incredibly low HERS rating. Naturally, the percentage of cost savings differs somewhat from the percentage of energy savings because it represents a combination of electricity and natural gas, which have different prices and usage patterns in the home.

C. Universal Design. Full Universal Design (UD) requirements are one of the project goals, and the development team has included a nationally recognized Universal Design Consultant throughout the design process.

The site integrates the following UD features:

- No grade changes between floor levels of homes, carports, and patios. Walkways require no steps or ramps.
- Housing is grouped in clusters to foster familiarity, strong community connections, and opportunities for support.
- All travel paths are hard surfaced materials for easy negotiation.
- Material differentiation makes a pedestrian path easily detectable on a shared road.
- Customized landscape, color choices, and exterior details to enhance house identification

- Raised planting beds reduce the need for stooping or bending.
- Warning strips provide a detectable visual and textural alert at the transition between the driveway and shared road.

The exterior of the home incorporates the following UD features:

- House numbers are visible with high contrast and easily identifiable.
- Carport provides height clearance for a lift equipped van and provides cover from weather at the side entry for easy paced door operation.
- Large windows provide accessible egress and a view at multiple heights.
- Easy access to outdoor storage.
- Porch provides cover from weather at the front entry for easy door operation.
- Entry doors feature a half-lite to allow a view from multiple heights to identify visitors. The front door is well designated for intuitive entry.
- Low wall is provided at the front entry for seating or package shelf.
- Concrete slab on grade provides at grade access to all areas of the house, porch, patio, and driveway.

The interior incorporates the following universal design architectural features:

- Bathrooms: Ample turn around and transfer space is provided. Knee space is provided under the lavatory either with a built-in open space or with a vanity that can be converted to provide adequate space. Bathtub with a built-in seat and a curbless shower, both with offset controls. Ample blocking will be provided for grab bars.
- Kitchen: Accessible appliances include a stove with front controls and a side-by-side refrigerator. Kitchen and cabinet layout provide sufficient clearances for wheelchair use. Accessible storage includes drawers, pull outs, and low mounted wall cabinets. Multiple work surface heights are provided for a variety of users. Accessible plugs and controls for lighting, disposal, fans, and outlets.
- Living Spaces: All doors are at least 2'-10" wide. Excellent maneuvering in circulation spaces.
- Clear definition of public vs. private, intuitively identifying zones of use. Visible contrast provided at edges of floors/walls, cabinets/countertops, etc. All mechanical systems, outlets, switches, etc. are mounted at accessible heights. All closets and storage systems are height adjustable.

D. Affordability. The homes will be sold to Howard County residents making 80% or less of Baltimore Metropolitan Statistical area median income (about \$65,000 for a family of four). The anticipated sales prices for the units will be approximately \$250,000.

E. Funding. The Development will be financed with an Enterprise Community Loan Fund predevelopment and construction revolving loan, CDBG and HOME grants, and Commission funds.

The Development is located within the designated Route 1 Community Legacy Area. The Department is therefore requesting assistance from the State of Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development ("DHCD") for a Community Legacy Program grant to help fill the current funding gap of approximately \$200,000.

As a condition of the financing, DHCD requires that the County Council approve the application for the Community Legacy grant.

Fiscal Impact

Should the Resolution be approved by the Council, no fiscal impact to the County is expected to result.

The Howard County Department of Housing and Community Development recommends approval of the Resolution.

cc: Ken Ulman, County Executive
Jennifer Sager, Legislative Coordinator